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Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

TEMP Max 31 | Min 20 | Humidity 81% Rain Sensex 76,905 | Nifty 23,350 | Gold 87,850 | Silver 97,860 | Dollar 86.02 | Euro 93.18 | GBP 111.23

OIL FREE

All government and aided schools to reduce sunflower oil usage in midday meals by 10% for academic year 2024-25

PAGE 2

OFF THE RAILS

What is the hold-up to Bengaluru Suburban Rail project? Leadership gap, land acquisition delay part of the reason

PAGE 4

State to make it compulsory for companies selling drinking water bottles to buy empty ones back at minimum price; experts suggest it is time to go further ahead and discourage use of bottled water

GENIE IS OUT OF THE BOTTLE

How about hefty environment or luxury taxes?

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

To reduce plastic pollution, the Karnataka government is set to implement a buy-back scheme for drinking water bottles. Experts are viewing this plan with a touch of caution as they warn that implementation may be tricky.

Minister for Forest, Ecology and Environment Eswar B Khandre has said that shops selling water bottles will have to mandatorily buy back empty bottles from customers at a minimum price.

The minister has instructed the Additional Chief Secretary of the department to frame rules for effective implementation of the scheme.

"Companies selling drinking water bottles will also be responsible for scientific disposal of plastic bottles. The plastic bottle menace can be controlled if the buyback scheme can be implemented successfully," Khandre said on Saturday.

The decision is being taken as a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 >>

"While in concept it is a good idea to attract collection by offering a discount on the price for a new item, in reality, those who buy mineral water do so for convenience

— Odette Katrak, Beautiful Bharat

GREEN COVER BLOWN

Report after report shows city's development is coming at the cost of its green cover

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Though Saturday's rain brought relief from relentless heat, the beginning of summer has been harsh for Bengaluru so far with temperatures soaring, surpassing previous records. Experts warned that the city is rapidly losing its cool and is at risk of becoming an urban heat zone. To combat this, environmentalists emphasise the urgent need for afforestation and the preservation of water bodies to restore the city's lost greenery and maintain ecological balance.

"Every tree we lose is a degree we gain. Bengaluru's soaring temperatures are a direct consequence of vanishing green cover. If we don't act now, the Garden City will soon become a heat island," said Ananya Sreenivasan, a green activist.

In 2021, Bengaluru had 263.60 sq. km of open forest area, which has now reduced to 187.24 sq. km. Similarly, the moderately dense forest area has shrunk from 24.88 sq. km to 12.66 sq. km. As a direct consequence, the city has been experiencing rising temperatures, as confirmed by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), which has submitted a report on Bengaluru's deteriorating green cover to the Green Tribunal.

Several studies have highlighted the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 Film screening

National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) presents film screening and discussion on 'Breaking The Nets' an oral history of India's fisherwomen to mark International Women's Day. **Where: National Gallery of Modern Art; When: March 28, at 4.00 pm**

02 Musical morning

Concert by Vidushi Subhalakshmi Krishnamoorthy (vocals); Vidushi Jyotsana Manjunath (violin) Vidushi Ranjani Venkatesh (mridangam) **Where: Bandstand, Cubbon Park When: March 23, 8-9 am**

03 Art workshop

National Gallery of Modern Art, Bengaluru cordially invites you for an exclusion art exhibition- a 90-minute workshop exploring self-care through the arts, held alongside the Sanhitha exhibition. **Where: NGMA Bengaluru; When: March 29, 11.30 am**

04 Traditional feast

Grand Mercure Bengaluru at Gopalan Mall presents La Utsav, a special festive spread celebrating the flavours of Ugadi with authentic delicacies. **Where: Grand Mercure Bengaluru at Gopalan Mall; When: March 30, 1.00 pm – 4.00 pm**

05 Paws & purpose

Join a eventful Pet Lover Fundraiser by Maverick & Farmer, to help our furry friends with a day of food, fashion and animal support community. **Where: Maverick & Farmer, Ulsoor; When: March 29, 10 am – 6 pm**

Housing prices surge in city's key micro-markets

Bengaluru's real estate market continues its upward trajectory, with Thanisandra Main Road and Sarjapur Road witnessing significant price and rental growth over the past three years. According to data from Anarock, housing prices on Sarjapur Road have surged by 63%, reaching ₹9,850 per sq. ft. by the end of 2024, compared to ₹6,050 per sq. ft. in 2021. Thanisandra Main Road saw an even steeper rise of 67%, climbing from ₹5,345 per sq. ft. to ₹8,900 per sq. ft.

The rental market has followed suit, with average monthly rents in Sarjapur Road increasing by 76% to ₹36,900, up from ₹21,000 in 2021. Meanwhile, Thanisandra Main Road saw a 62% rise in rents, now averaging ₹33,200, compared to ₹20,500 three years ago.

The rise in property values and rentals underscores the growing demand in these micro-markets, driven by IT hubs, improved connectivity, and infrastructure development. — PTI

Umbrellas out

After days of heat, citizens enjoy a day out in the rain on Saturday. Meanwhile, the first showers of the year resulted in severe traffic congestion across the city. Waterlogging in several key areas such as Ramamurthy Nagar underpass towards Tin Factory, Hunasamaranahalli on International Airport Road and Grand Season Hotel on Kasturi Nagar Ring Road, brought traffic to a standstill.

PIC: KAUSHIK JN

Schools to cut cooking oil by 10% in midday meals

State government mandates healthier eating under PM Poshan scheme; awareness and training drive aimed at fighting childhood obesity launched

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The Midday Meal Scheme ensures that students in government and aided schools receive hot, nutritious meals

The State Government has directed all government and aided schools to reduce sunflower oil usage in midday meals by 10% for the academic year 2024-25, following a directive from the Ministry of Education, Government of India. The move aligns with the Prime Minister's call to combat childhood obesity and related health risks by promoting healthier eating habits in schools.

In a circular issued by the Commissioner of Public Instruction, it was stated that the current oil consumption under the PM Poshan scheme is 5 grams per child for Grades 1-5 and 7.5 grams per child for Grades 6-10. However, with childhood obesity rates rising significantly in India—from 0.4 million in 1990 to 12.5 million in 2022, according to The Lancet—the government is advocating a gradual reduction in oil intake while ensuring meal quality and nutrition are maintained.

Focus on healthy eating & nutrition

The circular stated that the PM Poshan scheme, formerly known as the Midday Meal Scheme, ensures that students in government and aided schools receive hot, nutritious meals with a balanced intake of grains, pulses, vegetables, and fortified cooking oil. The initiative aims to combat malnutrition while addressing rising obesity concerns. In line with new guidelines, the Department of School Education has introduced awareness initiatives and training programs to help schools implement a 10% reduction in cooking oil usage. Key measures include training kitchen staff in healthier cooking methods, conducting workshops led by nutritionists to maintain taste while reducing oil, and launching awareness campaigns on childhood obesity risks for students and parents. Schools are also encouraged to integrate physical activities, yoga, and fitness programs while promoting alternative cooking methods such as steaming, roasting, and grilling. Strict monitoring protocols will be implemented to track oil consumption and ensure compliance. Additionally, community participation will be fostered through parental guidance sessions and engagement activities to reinforce healthier dietary habits.

Oil consumption under the PM Poshan scheme is 5 grams per child for Grades 1-5 and 7.5 grams per child for Grades 6-10

Education officials emphasised that reducing oil usage will not compromise meal quality but will instead contribute to a healthier future for students. This initiative is part of a broader effort to promote better nutrition and prevent lifestyle diseases among school children. The Department of School Education has directed all schools to implement these changes immediately and ensure strict compliance with the new health-focused guidelines.

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Leadership void and land hurdles delay Rail Project

Lack of full-time Managing Director and delays in land acquisition are stalling Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project; Union Railways Minister attributes slowdown to govt's inefficiencies in approvals and execution

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Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has attributed the delay in the Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project (BSRP) to the Karnataka government's failure to appoint a full-time Managing Director (MD). He suggested that an official from the Indian Railway Service be appointed to ensure better technical expertise and project execution. Responding to Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya in the Lok Sabha, Vaishnaw stated that a part-time MD, appointed by the Karnataka government, is currently overseeing the project, but a full-time MD well-versed in railway technology is essential for smooth progress.

Although Indian Railways transferred its land, slow state acquisition delays the project

Challenges in project completion

During the reply, Vaishnaw highlighted that several factors impact the completion of railway projects, including land acquisition by the state government, forest clearances, shifting of utilities, statutory approvals, geological conditions, and law and order situations. He stressed that all these elements collectively determine the project's timeline.

Current status

The Minister said that the Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) Limited (K-RIDE), jointly controlled by the Government of Karnataka (51% equity) and the Government of India (49% equity), is executing the 148.17 km BSRP at an estimated cost of ₹15,767 crore. The funding structure includes 20% contributions from both the Centre and the State, with the remaining 60% through debt financing. The Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project consists of four corridors: Corridor-1 from KSR Bengaluru City to Devanahalli (41.4 km), Corridor-2 from Baiyappanahalli to Chikkabanawara (25.01 km), Corridor-3 from Kengeri to Whitefield (35.52 km), and Corridor-4 from Heelalige to Rajankunte (46.25 km). Currently, construction work is progressing on Corridors 2 and 4, while preliminary activities for Corridors 1 and 3 have been initiated by K-RIDE. Although Indian Railways has already transferred its land for the project, the State Government's slow land acquisition process continues to hinder progress, further delaying the overall completion.

Ongoing rail projects

He said that there were nine State Joint Venture Companies operating under the Centre-State Partnership model across the country. Various Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models are being implemented, including Non-Governmental Railways (NGR), Joint Ventures (JV), Customer-Funded (CF), Build-Own-Transfer (BOT), and Annuity models. So far, a total of 19 projects have been completed, while 12 are still under construction. "Among the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) railway projects, it is noted that six have turned profitable as of March 31, 2024, while the remaining projects are in different developmental stages of construction and operation," he added.

Railway projects depend on land acquisition, clearances, utility shifts, approvals, geology, and law and order

Statewide bandh over language row passes peacefully

KAUSHIK JN

A statewide bandh called by pro-Kannada groups on Saturday, protesting the alleged assault on a state-run bus conductor in Belagavi for not knowing Marathi, passed off peacefully. Police had made extensive security arrangements to prevent disruptions, ensuring there were no untoward incidents. Despite pro-Kannada activists staging demonstrations and urging shopkeepers to support the bandh, most commercial establishments remained open.

In Bengaluru, activists gathered at Mysore Bank Circle, raising slogans and holding placards, while others staged protests at BMTC and KSRTC bus stands in Majestic, urging transport workers to join the bandh. As tensions escalated, police detained several demonstrators, including Kannada Chalavali (Vatal Paksha) leader Vatal Nagaraj, who termed the bandh a "success," claiming that bus stands were deserted and many businesses had shut. He also alleged that over 3,000 Kannada activists had been taken into preventive custody the previous night.

Many businesses in city, including hotels and malls, stayed open on Saturday

Protests were reported from Mysuru, where activists blocked buses at the suburban stand and staged a dharna to prevent services to Bengaluru and other parts of the state. Similar demonstrations took place in Davangere, while in Belagavi, sources confirmed that KSRTC buses operated normally, though Maharashtra-bound services were restricted due to the ongoing linguistic dispute.

The controversy stems from an incident in Balekundri, where a bus conductor was allegedly assaulted, and a separate case in Kinaye village, where Panchayat officials were reportedly harassed for not speaking Marathi. The accused in both incidents have been arrested.

Even though a holiday was not declared for schools and colleges yet a few schools which were conducting exams had deferred Saturday's exam to another day. Public transport services, including KSRTC (Karnatak State Road Corporation) and BMTC buses, largely remained unaffected. Some autorickshaw, cab, and private transport unions extended their support, but many businesses, including hotels, malls, and restaurants, stayed operational, offering only moral support. Essential services such as pharmacies, hospitals, ambulances, and metro operations continued as usual. — BMB

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Garbage crisis

Assaye Road

Garbage has been piling up for seven days on 4th Cross, Assaye Road, opposite Aloysius College. Residents blame BBMP's once-a-week collection, urging immediate action to prevent health hazards.

Slow progress

Jakkur

Roadwork on Shivanahalli, Jakkur Raithara Santhe Road has been dragging for months. With summer rains and monsoons nearing, residents fear worsening conditions and demand swift completion.

Blocked footpaths

Jayanagar

Footpaths at 2, 198, 38th Cross Road, 5th Block, Jayanagar, are fully encroached, forcing pedestrians onto the road. Residents demand immediate action to restore safe walking space.

Event organiser claims fund misuse in cultural fest

Complainant alleges financial fraud in payments, citing unpaid dues and commission demands, prompting police probe

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A city-based event manager has filed a complaint alleging fraud and financial irregularities involving payments for the Kanakagiri Utsav, held on March 2 and 3, 2024. The complaint, submitted to the Commissioner of Crimes, Bangalore City, outlines a complex financial dispute involving multiple parties and unfulfilled payment agreements.

The complainant and owner of Present Innovative Creation and Solution stated that he was verbally entrusted with organising the Kanakagiri Utsav along with Vishwas Bhardwaj, Sudha, and Parthasarathy. The event, which was managed by the four individuals through their organisation, was meant to be a shared financial responsibility. However, Vinay alleges that significant sums of money were withheld by associates involved in the project.

According to the complaint mentioned in the FIR, an amount of Rs 5.50 crore was allocated for the festival's expenses. Three bills, each totalling Rs 1.99 crore, were submitted for payment. However, before the funds were released, two individuals Varun Kumar and Shashidhar allegedly demanded a 5% commission from the sanctioned amount. They assured the complainant that the balance payment would be settled soon.

In an effort to secure the funds, an agreement was signed between Vinay, Sudha, Shashidhar, and Varun Kumar on October 19, 2024. Five cheques were issued as part of the agreement, which were then stored at Vinay's office under the supervision of his office assistant, Vinod. Subsequently, the complaint claimed that he received Rs 30 lakh from an associate named Diwakar but was still owed Rs 43.50 lakh, plus interest. To ensure payment, he obtained additional cheques from Shashidhar and issued his cheques as a guarantee.

Despite repeated requests, Varun Kumar allegedly failed to honour his payments, citing GST issues. On August 29, 2024, an outstanding amount of Rs 25 lakh remained unpaid. Vinay further claimed that the second bill of Rs 1.85 crore, associated with Antarya Media Company, remained unpaid, with Rs 1.48 crore still due after deducting the 5% commission. Similarly, a third bill amounting to Rs 1.88 crore, connected to Sashidhar's Commerce Accounting, was also not settled, leaving an outstanding balance of Rs 1.51 crore.

The complainant alleges that on November 2, 2024, while he was in the hospital due to his father's health issues, Shashidhar and others fraudulently obtained important documents and cheques from his office assistant, Vinod. When confronted, Shashidhar reportedly refused to return the funds and dismissed his claims, leading to the current legal action.

The complainant has accused Shashidhar, Varun Kumar, Sudha, Parthasarathy, and Vaibhav Kumar of conspiring to defraud him of his rightful share of the Kanakagiri Utsav payments. Police officials acknowledged the complaint, and an investigation is reportedly underway to verify the claims and take necessary action. A senior police official stated that the five accused have not yet been arrested, and further investigation is ongoing.

Organisers were to share cost, but one alleges associates withheld funds

Two men injured in assault

Two men were attacked by a group of three at Spoorthi Bar in Mahalakshmi Layout on Friday night. The victims, identified as Vamsi and Pawan, were reportedly attacked when the assailants barged in, smashing beer bottles at them before fleeing the scene. Eyewitnesses claim the assailants stormed into the bar without warning, targeting Vamsi and Pawan, both in their early twenties. The sudden assault left the duo bleeding profusely as they collapsed inside the establishment. The attackers vanished within moments. Mahalakshmi Layout police swiftly responded to the incident, rushing the injured to a nearby hospital. While both victims remain in the ICU, doctors confirm they are out of danger. Preliminary investigations suggest that the attack stemmed from an old rivalry.

A police team, led by the DCP, visited the scene to gather evidence. Officers are currently reviewing CCTV footage from the bar to identify and track down the suspects. The exact motive behind the attack will be confirmed once the accused are apprehended, said an officer involved in the case.

Speaker defends MLA suspensions

Karnataka Assembly Speaker U T Khader on Saturday said it is impossible to tolerate the insult to the 'chair', which is the symbol of parliamentary democracy.

Eighteen BJP MLAs were suspended for six months from the Assembly on Friday after they went up to the podium and threw the bill about the four per cent reservation to the Muslims in government contracts on the Speaker.

Khader said people should know that no one is above the Assembly in the state and it is the duty of everyone to respect it. The Speaker is the head of the House and he holds the constitutional post, he explained while speaking to reporters.

He also stated that the BJP MLAs showed no remorse for their action despite being suspended.

According to him, the decision to suspend MLAs was necessary because their action would become a precedent at Panchayat and municipal bodies.

"There was a need to send a message to check such tendencies. We need to convey to the people why we should respect constitutional posts. That's why the decision was taken," Khader told reporters. –PTI

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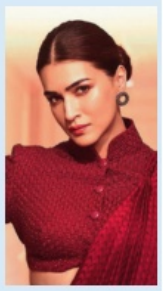

PROPER DAY OFF: What Kriti means when she say it is her off day

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Toilet structure in Nagarhole core area raises concerns

Despite SC directives, permanent structures continue to exist inside critical tiger reserves

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A newly renovated toilet structure inside the core area of Nagarhole Tiger Reserve has sparked controversy, with wildlife activists claiming it violates NTCA guidelines and Supreme Court orders; officials argue no direct instructions were issued to remove such facilities

Wildlife activists have raised concerns over the presence of a permanent structure—a toilet—in the core area of Nagarhole Tiger Reserve, stating that it violates guidelines set by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and orders issued by the Supreme Court.

"NTCA guidelines clearly state that all tourism-related infrastructure should be relocated outside core tiger reserves. In this case, not only has the structure remained, but it was also recently renovated by an external agency. This directly violates both NTCA guidelines and past Supreme Court orders," said Ram, a wildlife photographer from the area.

Tourism in tiger reserves is regulated under the Tiger Conservation Plan, approved by the NTCA under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The plan promotes low-impact tourism to safeguard the ecological integrity of forests and wildlife while keeping core areas inviolate.

In 2012, the NTCA directed all states to remove tourism-related infrastructure from the core areas of tiger reserves, which are critical habitats for big cats. It had also instructed that permanent tourist facilities inside these zones be phased out within a set timeframe, ensuring minimal impact on wildlife. According to NTCA regulations, no construction of commercial tourist lodges, hotels, zoos, or safari parks can take place in these core areas without prior approval.

Experts point to a 2019 NTCA circular that sought updates from state forest departments on the extent of phasing out tourism facilities from core areas. "Based on NTCA guidelines and Supreme Court directives, state forest departments, including Karnataka's, were asked to provide details on permanent tourism facilities inside core areas, progress on their removal since 2012, and a timeline for their complete phase-out. However, even after a decade, the Karnataka Forest Department has not complied," an expert noted.

Officials deny receiving any orders from the Chief Wildlife Warden, stating that permanent structures exist in tiger reserves nationwide. They assert that safaris in core areas follow NTCA-approved protocols

Officials from Nagarhole Tiger Reserve, however, claim that no such orders have been issued by the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWW) of Karnataka.

"We have not received any directives from the CWW. Moreover, permanent structures exist inside most tiger reserves, not just in Karnataka but across the country. While NTCA had issued guidelines to phase them out, no specific timeline was mentioned. Since the safari is conducted within core areas as part of the Annual Plan of Operation (APO) approved by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), we are following the necessary protocols," said PA Seema, Deputy Conservator of Forests, Karnataka Forest Department.

AAI reviews B'luru 2nd airport

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Following the State Government's identification of three potential sites for Bengaluru's second international greenfield airport, a multidisciplinary team from the Airports Authority of India (AAI) will visit Karnataka between April 7 and 9 to assess their feasibility. The Karnataka State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (KSIIDC) has already paid Rs 1.21 crore to the authority for the study, Infrastructure Development Minister MB Patil said on Saturday at his residence in Sadashivanagar.

Patil stated that two locations on Kanakapura Road and one on the Nelamangala-Kunigal Road have been shortlisted. "We wrote to the Airports Authority on the 5th of this month, requesting them to inspect the selected sites. As per their instructions, a team will visit. We have already compiled essential documents, including revenue maps, 10 years of weather data, detailed geographic images, Survey of India maps, and operational details for the proposed airport," he explained.

The existing Kempegowda International Airport is facing increasing pressure, and the restriction on having another airport within a 150-km radius will lapse by 2033. The government is expediting the process so the second airport can be operational by then.

Responding to suggestions of locating the airport near Sira in Tumakuru, Patil said this would make it similar to district-level airports in Shivamogga and Vijayapura. "To truly serve Bengaluru, the airport must be closer to the city. Otherwise, investors may not find the project viable," he added.

Chandrayaan-4 aims to bring lunar samples to earth

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Official says the mission enhances India's lunar expertise, technology

The launch of Chandrayaan-4 is scheduled for October 2027, marking another milestone in India's space research and innovation. According to data presented in Parliament, the Chandrayaan-4 mission aims to collect lunar samples from the southern high latitudes and return them to Earth for scientific study. This ambitious project will also serve as a platform to demonstrate critical technologies that will contribute to India's goal of landing an astronaut on the Moon by 2040. With a sanctioned budget of 2,104 crores, the mission represents a significant step in India's lunar exploration journey.

"Building on the success of previous missions, Chandrayaan-4 is designed to achieve multiple objectives. It will demonstrate key technologies essential for future crewed. Moon missions, facilitate a more detailed scientific study of lunar samples than what is possible with landers and rovers, and provide insights for future planetary exploration, including human missions. Additionally, the mission aims to enhance India's expertise in lunar science, strengthen technological and scientific capabilities, and bolster the country's global presence in space exploration," an official said.

Gaganyaan programme revised

Meanwhile, the Gaganyaan Programme, India's first human spaceflight mission, has been revised with an updated budget of 20,193 crores. This includes 341 crores for revenue expenditure and 19,852 crores for capital investment. The revised roadmap aligns with India's long-term space vision, which includes establishing a Bhartiya Antriksh Station by 2035 and an Indian crewed lunar mission by 2040.

Gaganyaan Programme has been revised with a 20,193 crore budget, now including 8 missions and plans for Bhartiya Antriksh Station by 2035. ISRO partners with private firms for astronaut training

Officials have outlined a phased approach for the Gaganyaan mission, which will now consist of eight flights—six uncrewed and two crewed. These missions will focus on developing and validating key technologies needed for future deep-space exploration.

Collaboration with private sector

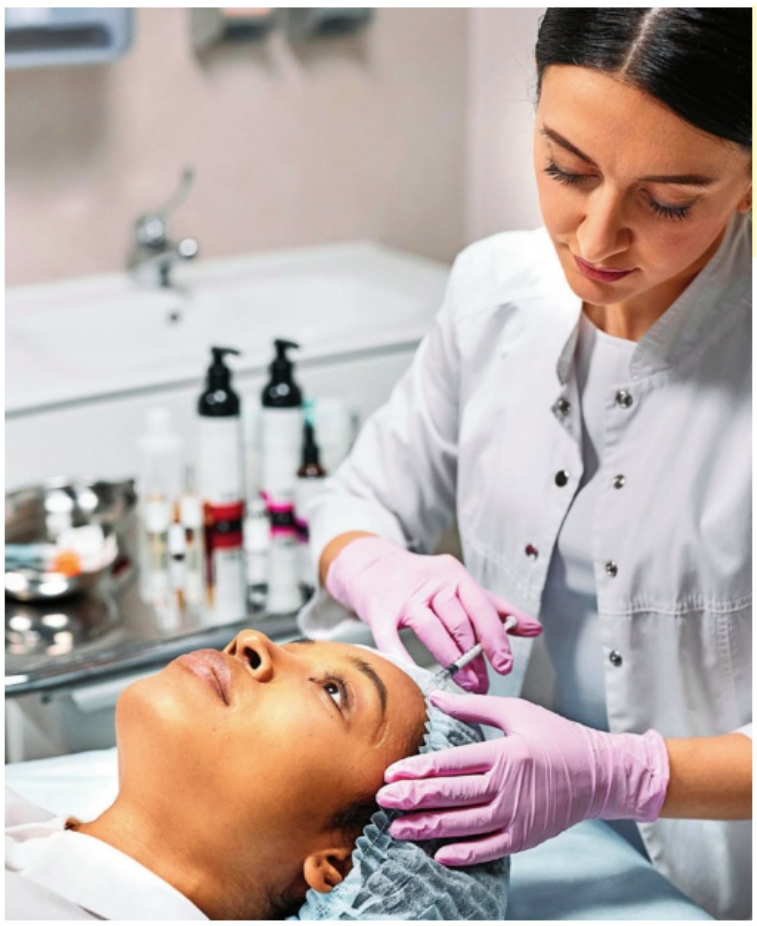
ISRO is collaborating with multiple national agencies and private enterprises to develop crucial technologies for the mission. The private sector is playing a significant role in various areas, including launch vehicle systems, critical subsystems, and astronaut training. Contributions also extend to the development of the simulated Crew Module for tests, Crew Module Recovery Models, virtual reality-based training simulators, and indigenous Environment Control and Life Support Systems (ECLSS).

Facial Surgery: Transforming Lives and Restoring Confidence

In the ever-evolving field of medical science, facial surgery has emerged as a beacon of hope for individuals dealing with congenital conditions, trauma, or the desire for enhanced aesthetics. Advanced surgical techniques are helping countless patients regain confidence, function, and a new outlook on life. With cutting-edge technology and expert hands, facial surgery is offering life-changing transformations to people around the world.

The Power of Facial Reconstruction

Facial reconstructive surgery is giving a new lease on life to those who have suffered from birth defects, accidents, or diseases. A leading plastic and reconstructive surgeon said, "Facial surgery is not just about aesthetics; it plays a crucial role in restoring vital functions such as speech, breathing, and eating. With modern techniques, we can reconstruct damaged facial structures, helping patients lead normal lives." One such inspiring story is that of a 28-year-old patient, who survived a severe car accident that left her with multiple facial fractures. "I lost all hope of ever looking or feeling normal again," she recalls. "But after undergoing reconstructive surgery, I regained my self-esteem and confidence. I am beyond grateful to my medical team."



"The use of 3D printing in reconstructive surgery has been groundbreaking. We can now create patient-specific implants that fit perfectly ..."

Aesthetic Surgery: Beyond Beauty

While reconstructive procedures focus on medical necessity, aesthetic facial surgeries have also significantly improved the quality of life for many. From rhinoplasty to facelift procedures, patients are not only enhancing their appearance but also boosting their mental well-being.

A cosmetic patient added, "Many of our patients come to us with insecurities that have affected their self-worth for years. The right surgical intervention can empower them to feel their best and live life to the fullest."

Take the case of a 35-year-old professional who struggled with severe acne scars since adolescence. "I always felt self-conscious in public," Rohan admits. "After my treatment, I feel like a new person. It's not about vanity—it's about feeling comfortable in my own skin."

Innovation and Technology in Surgery

With technological advancements such as 3D imaging, robotic surgery, and minimally invasive techniques, facial surgery has become safer and more effective than ever. These innovations allow surgeons to achieve highly precise results while minimizing recovery time. A maxillofacial surgeon, notes, "The use of 3D printing in reconstructive surgery has been groundbreaking. We can now create patient-specific implants that fit perfectly, resulting in better outcomes and shorter recovery periods."

A Brighter Future for Patients

As medical science continues to progress, facial surgery is set to benefit even more individuals, helping them overcome physical and psychological challenges. Patients who once felt limited by their conditions are now embracing life with newfound confidence and optimism.

A patient said, "My surgery didn't just change my face—it changed my life. And for that, I will always be grateful. With continued research and innovation, the field of facial surgery will keep unlocking possibilities, offering countless individuals the chance to smile again—both inside and out."

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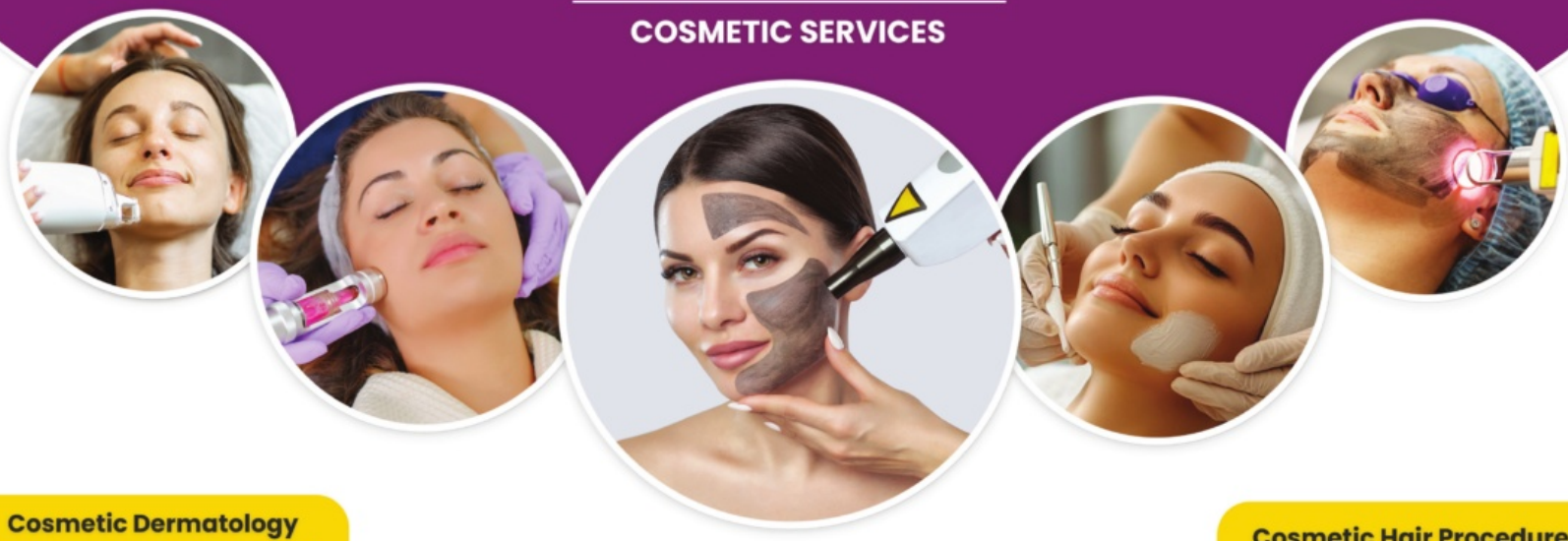

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THE SUNDAY READ

Satire saves the day

Meet the creator of Musalman, who uses his comic to create a modern mythology

Rachana Ramesh
c-rachana.ramesh@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Having originated as a video concept, Falah decided to produce comic strips after being inspired by Harvey Pekar, an underground American comic writer

Falah Faisal, who meddles in the field of comedy, filmmaking and journalism, said that the first ever comic strip he released was on September 11, 2017. "It was titled Musalman vs the Trade Centre. At that point, it was a six-frame comic. In it, you could see a building and a creature flying into it. The strip zooms in to show Musalman flying into the building but the building does not shatter down. I want to reclaim the date 9/11 for the Muslims as 11/9 - the birthday of Musalman," he recalled.

Initially having originated as a video concept, Falah decided to produce comic strips after being inspired by Harvey Pekar, an underground American comic writer. He soon realised comic strips could be created at a lower budget and were equally effective. "It was initially sporadic and remained till 2020. It was during the first lockdown of the covid-19 pandemic that Musalman truly began," he said.

Falah said that his identity as a Muslim has evolved with the series. "I initially began writing with the intention of being edgy but during the process, I had to document the CAA protests. The way in which the right-wing has transformed India makes you feel oppressed, making Muslaman a protector," he said, adding that he has gone from being an atheist to fasting and writing the comic through the holy month of Ramzan. "While I am a Muslim, I am an Indian secular. I went to a Christian school where we were taught the scriptures and I still consider the lord's prayer to be my default. In my room, there is an idol of Ganesha and Nataraja. I read the Gita and the Quran. I practise Vipassana Meditation which is believed to be Buddha's original technique. Musalman is a syncretistic attempt to make people understand that we have more in common when compared to the differences. It is also a satirical attempt at making sense of the world around me," he explained.

Appupen, a comic artist and creator of Rashtraman, a right-wing superhero character, has been a great influence, Falah said. "When I had the idea of Musalman, I practically showed up at his door. He was also the one who connected me with my first artist. While Appupen is not a right-wing person, he has created this character as a way to poke fun at right-wing beliefs. Even though we have competing heroes, we are great friends and collaborate quite often," he explained. The most rewarding result of pursuing the comic has been the sheer amount of love received from his audience, Falah said. "A nine-year-old boy in his white-shirt, painted with the Musalman logo met me and said that I was his favourite superhero after Spiderman," he recalled. "Once, back when Musalman was still on Facebook, someone messaged me to say they belong to an RSS family but reading my work showed them the light and asked me to keep doing what I do. Another time, someone came on my page to troll me but after seeing my video Musalman on Kashmir, commented, 'If more Muslims were like you, we wouldn't have a problem with Muslims'," Falah shared instances that have caused an impact.

exchanged biryani during Eid with their neighbours, received cake for Christmas and celebrated Diwali together. "As I travel across India, I've come to understand that the nation I grew up in was a bubble. Many recognise this and it pains them that the harmony is withering away. Differences among us are being exploited for political reasons by those in power," he explained.

In a fitting twist to his journey as a multimedia storyteller, Falah Faisal made his LitFest panel debut not by invitation, but by seizing the moment. While attending Alliance University's festival to catch up with fellow artist Appupen, he found himself in the author lounge when comedian Preiti Das lamented that her co-panelist, Jeet Thayil, hadn't shown up. Sensing an opportunity, Falah stepped up, and within minutes, his bio was printed, a placard with his name was placed on the table, and he was on stage for a panel discussion on Performing Arts and Shaping Stories.

True to form, he opened with five minutes of fresh stand-up, instantly winning over the college crowd. The session was a hit, and by the end of it, he found himself surrounded by students eager for autographs and selfies. It was a moment that perfectly encapsulated Falah's creative ethos—bold, spontaneous, and always ready to turn a story into a spectacle.

He is currently writing a film adaptation of my work titled Musalman ka Mohallah, which is a superhero sports drama.

He also writes another series Falahdeen, which is far more personal about a stoner and genie who lives in his bong. It's a modern twist on Aladdin - his favourite cartoon as a kid. One can read the entire series on MusalmanComix.com and follow it on Instagram @musalmancomix

"As I travel across India, I've come to understand that the nation I grew up in was a bubble. Many recognise this and it pains them that the harmony is withering away

–Falah Faisal, artist

HEALTH TIP: Consistency is crucial for weight loss, and walking can be done regularly

The number of calories burned depends on factors such as your weight, speed, and duration of walking

mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com
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All you need to know about...

Haemorrhoids during pregnancy

Symptoms

- The first and foremost symptom to watch out for is constipation. During pregnancy, many dietary restrictions may lead to a reduction in water or fibre intake.
- Additionally, the progesterone hormone, released in the body during pregnancy, relaxes muscles, including those in the digestive tract. As a result, bowel movements slow down, causing stool retention.
- The gut also has a tendency to reabsorb water, which further leads to constipation, ultimately resulting in haemorrhoids.
- Initially, constipation occurs, followed by the development of a fissure, which is a tear in the skin of the anal region.
- Pregnant women may also experience bleeding, pain, swelling, and mild mucus discharge in the anal area.

Treatment

The treatment for haemorrhoids depends on their grade or severity. There are four grades of haemorrhoids:

Grades 1 And 2

Can be treated with medications. If a pregnant woman is hesitant to take medicines, Ayurvedic therapy is an alternative. Medicated enemas in small doses can help relieve constipation and heal haemorrhoids from within.

Grades 3 And 4

If haemorrhoids progress to these stages or cause significant bleeding, minimally invasive techniques like laser therapy may be required. These treatments are effective and cause minimal discomfort.

Seek A Proactive Gut Health Check Before Pregnancy

If you are planning to conceive, it is essential to check your gut health to detect and treat any pre-existing issues such as piles or fistula. If left untreated, these conditions can worsen during pregnancy. Even if you experience minor gut health concerns, it is best to consult a proctologist for early intervention and management.

—Femina

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BOTTLE GOURD AND COCONUT BUTTERMILK

(A natural probiotic drink that promotes intestinal health and light digestion.)

INGREDIENTS

- ½ bottle gourd (lauki) peeled and sliced.
- 1 cup coconut yoghurt (or homemade peanut curd).
- 1 cup water.
- ½ teaspoon toasted cumin powder
- Green chilli is optional.
- Pink salt (to taste)
- Fresh mint leaves for garnish.

METHOD

- Blend the bottle gourd, and chilli with water. Strain if necessary.
- Combine the juice, coconut yoghurt, cumin, and salt.
- Serve chilled with a mint garnish.

JOWAR & DRUMSTICK LEAF DOSA

(Gluten-free dosa substitute packed with minerals and fiber.)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup of jowar flour
- ¼ cup rice flour
- ½ cup drumstick leaves, chopped
- 1 green chili, chopped (optional)
- 1/2 inch grated ginger
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 ½ cups water (may vary)
- Pink Salt to taste
- Cold press Oil to grease the pan

METHOD

- Mix all the ingredients in such a way that it forms a pouring consistency.
- Heat the pan, grease the pan slightly and pour the batter.
- Cook on medium heat until it turns golden brown, flip it over and cook the other side.
- Serve with the desired chutney.

SPROUTED MOONG AND RAW MANGO SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup sprouted moong (green gram)
- ½ cup raw mango, grated
- ½ cup diced cucumber
- 1/4 cup diced tomatoes
- ½ cup chopped mixed bell peppers
- 1 green chili, finely chopped (optional)
- Fresh chopped coriander, 2 tbsp
- Juice from 1 lemon
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- Pink salt to taste
- 2 tbsp roasted peanuts

METHOD

- Toss all ingredients in a bowl together -
- For the next 10 minutes, allow it to rest so the flavors can meld together.
- Serve this with roasted peanuts on top, and other as refreshing protein-dense snacks.

Benefits:

- The sprouted moong is jam-packed with plant protein and enzymes making it easy to digest.
- The raw mango is extremely helpful for preventing heat strokes and aiding digestion.
- This refreshing and fiber-packed salad keeps the gut clean and calm.

Recipes by Nidhi Nahata, 'Justbe by Nidhi Nahata'

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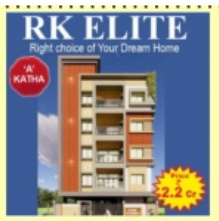

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3-year-old dies after tree falls on moving bike due to heavy winds

A three-year-old child lost her life after a tree fell on the bike she was riding with her father during heavy rain and strong winds near East Garden in Devarajeevanahalli. The victim, identified as Raksha, died on the spot, while her father, Satya, sustained minor injuries. He is currently receiving treatment at a hospital. The Pulakeshinagar police visited the accident site and launched an investigation.

According to officials, the tree was weakened due to the recent heavy rains, leading to its collapse on the moving bike. The accident occurred in the evening when strong winds swept through the area. BMB

Hotel staffer quizzed after explosives found in bag

Abdul Rahman, a hotel staff member, is being intensively interrogated by the State and Central Intelligence Agency and the National Investigation Agency (NIA) after explosive material was found in his bag. He is currently in the custody of Sampigehalli police.

Authorities are probing how he acquired the hand grenade, how long he had it, and who filled the ball-type grenade with chemical substances. Officials are also questioning who attached the explosive components and its intended use.

During interrogation, Rahman reportedly claimed, "I found a bomb while picking rags and kept it in my bag. I didn't know it was dangerous." However, police are verifying his statement and investigating his background, including his bank transactions.

Officials are also examining the type of projectile found, its purpose, and where it was prepared. The forensic report will determine its potential use and whether it was part of a larger plan. Meanwhile, security agencies are on high alert, considering the seriousness of the case.

Woman trafficking MDMA from B'luru arrested

A 34-year-old woman has been arrested in Kerala for allegedly trafficking synthetic drug MDMA worth several lakhs of rupees from Bengaluru, police officials said on Saturday. Anila Raveendran, a native of Anchalummoodu, was taken into custody on Friday evening by the Sakthikulangara police and the Kollam City Police District Anti-Narcotic Special Action Force (DANSAF). BMB

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I, Madhumati Shobhalal Shah W/o Laxman Lal R/o #93,4th Cross,railway Means Colony, 4th Block, Nandini Layout B'lore-560096 have changed my name to Madhu Devi

I, Atmanand Basavantappa Anikivi s/o Basavantappa Nimbeppa Anikivi, R/o #12 Greeshma, 4th Cross, Kuvempu Road Hebbal Kempapura B'lore- 560024 have changed my name to Atmanand Anikivi for all Purposes.

I, Noorullah Abdul Ahmed Noorullah R/o 50/1 Mudalappa Cross, Near Bombay Cotton Shop,Doddamavalli B'lore-560004 have changed my name to Noorullah

LOST & FOUND

LOST: This is to inform General public that I, Mr. Rajanna Sreedhara, GPA holder of Dr. Ganga Sudhakar w/o Mr. Kempanna Sudhakar(absolute owner of the below mentioned property) have lost following original documents pertaining to the property bearing No.7, 1st Main Road, Vyalikaval, Bengaluru-560003, measuring East to West: 90 feet and North to South: 45 feet and bounded on the East by: Road, West by: site no 40, North by: site no 15 & South by: site no 17, together with existing building. Doc 1: Site Allotment letter SI. No 203 dated 15.10.1951, Doc 2: Possession Certificate PR. No 110 dated 16.07.1953, Doc 3: BDA Sale Deed No.28609/1980-81 and Doc 4: Building Sanction Plan LP.No2296/60-61 Regarding this we have given a police compla int (Lost Report: 1533112/2025). If anybody found please contact 9880150813 or handover to the nearest police station.

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Take plastic bottles back where they come from

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

large number of single-use plastic products are being sold and discarded causing damage to the environment. This has continued despite the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) decision to impose a strict ban on 19 single-use plastic (SUP) items nearly three years ago.

"The retail outlets have been asked to sell bottled water under the payback scheme or by reducing the price. This will force the companies selling bottled water to discharge their EPR and dispose of the plastic bottles scientifically. If the empty bottles are repurchased and disposed of by the companies, plastic pollution will drop considerably," said Khandre.

Experts say while it is a good idea to collect empty plastic bottles by offering a discount on the price of the item, its implementation might prove to be tricky as the affordability of water bottles is not an issue for buyers.

"While in concept it is a good idea to attract collection by offering a discount on the price for a new item, in reality, those who buy mineral water do so for convenience. Affordability is not an issue for them - else they would carry water if saving cost was a factor, even if saving the environment doesn't feature as a reason," said Odette Katrak, co-founder of Beautiful Bharat, a citizen volunteer group.

Experts also suggest hefty environment or luxury taxes that make bottled water costly, forcing people to start carrying water in reusable containers.

This is similar to higher toll charges in central business districts of many cities like London or Singapore, compelling people to use public transport instead of private vehicles, a sound concept in practice that pushes users to adopt more sustainable practices.

"Carrying water in reusable bottles is a concept to encourage. Mineral bottles have a big carbon footprint and they are an avoidable non-essential item. High cost will push many to carry water in reusable containers," added Katrak.

Garden City turning into heat island

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

drastic reduction in Bangalore's greenery. A satellite-based survey conducted by the National Remote Sensing Centre under the Indian Research Institute revealed that the vegetation cover in BBMP limits dropped from 30.1% in 2006 to 26.1% in 2019, marking a 4% decline in 14 years.

Bengaluru, once known as the Garden City, is witnessing a rapid decline in its green cover. Among India's major metropolitan cities, Bengaluru has the least forest area, with its landscape increasingly transforming into a concrete jungle.

BangaloreMirror
B'luru laid bare: City losing green cover, says report
Pollution Control Board highlights city has lower proportion of its area under forest cover as compared to other cities
Bengaluru's green cover is shrinking while Delhi has successfully expanded its forests. Experts warn unchecked development is worsening the urban heat island effect, urging immediate action to balance growth

BM had reported about the CPCB report on March 18

Urban development goes on

Bengaluru, which has gained global recognition, has undergone significant changes in the name of urban development. Over the last five years, infrastructure projects such as metro expansion, suburban rail development, and road widening have led to the cutting down of approximately 15,000 trees.

According to the India State of Forest Report 2023, Bengaluru's forest cover, which stood at 288.48 sq. km in 2021, has drastically reduced to 89.02 sq. km in 2023, marking a loss of 199.46 sq. km in just two years. This alarming decline is pushing the city towards a hotter and more unlivable climate.

Forest cover declines by 6.85%

Compared to other major cities like New Delhi, Hyderabad, and Mumbai, Bengaluru's forest cover is strikingly low. BM had reported earlier that Delhi has managed to increase its green cover over the past two decades—from 10% of its total geographical area in 2001 to 25.04% in 2023. The city now boasts 194.15 sq. km of forest area, covering 12.60% of its total land. In contrast, Bengaluru's forest cover has shrunk to just 6.85% of its total area. Experts say that the Karnataka government must take proactive measures to balance infrastructure growth with environmental conservation.

Match-makers

B-Town provided glitz galore at IPL opening ceremony on Day 1 as RCB meets KKR

It's always a treat to watch a collaboration between members of Indian cinema and sports players. Today, the audience in Kolkata got lucky as they witnessed a star-studded crossover of Bollywood and cricket at the opening ceremony of the 18th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL), courtesy of Shah Rukh Khan.

With his amazing hosting skills, SRK added "chaar chand" to the ceremony. The highlight of the event was undoubtedly the moment when SRK called former RCB captain 'GOAT' and shook a leg with him on his blockbuster song 'Jhoome Jo Pathaan'.

The entire Eden Gardens erupted into loud 'Kohli Kohli' chants. Like the audience, SRK could not resist himself and chanted 'Kohli Kohli'.

"Virat bhai is the only player who has been associated with just one team in the entirety of the IPL. He is the OG. The GOAT of IPL," said Shah Rukh before asking Kohli to come on the stage.

"The king of 22 yards and a billion hearts. Let's hear the loudest for the one and only the GOAT, Mr. Virat Kohli," he added.

IN FOCUS IPL 2025

RCB's Josh Hazlewood celebrates with teammates after dismissing Kolkata Knight Riders' Quinton de Kock during the IPL 2025 inaugural match at Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Saturday; Actor and KKR co-owner Shah Rukh Khan with RCB player Virat Kohli

The match

Rajat Patidar, the captain of Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) has won the toss and elected to bowl first in the opening game of IPL 2025 against defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders at the Eden Gardens on Saturday.

Before the toss happened, the IPL 2025 season had the official opening ceremony hosted by actor-producer Shah Rukh Khan, also KKR's co-owner, along with performances by singer Shreya Ghoshal, actor Disha Patani and singer-rapper Karan Aulja.

After winning the toss, Patidar, captaining RCB for the first time in the IPL, said he is playing with three seamers and two spinners. Interestingly, RCB have not picked veteran India pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar for the tournament opener.

"The pitch looks hard. Amazing to lead RCB and great opportunity to learn from the great players. We have done proper preparations for the last 10-15 days. I am confused with this impact player rule," he said.

KKR skipper Ajinkya Rahane also said he was looking to field first and that he's also playing three fast bowlers and two spinners. "It's an honour to lead this team. Our preparation has been good, the core group has been the same. Looking forward to bat well first and defend later on. It is all about giving the players the freedom and allow them to play as a unit," he said.

All in the game

The original eight teams command valuations of up to: **$2 billion**

Pack leaders: Franchises like Mumbai Indians, Chennai Super Kings, and Royal Challengers Bengaluru

Big bucks

JioStar targeting **Rs 4,500** crore in ad revenue through **32** major sponsorship deals and a push for **100** million paid streaming subscribers

Media rights valued at **RS 48,390** crore

The 10 franchises made a combined investment of **Rs 639.15** crore in the mega auction, securing 182 players, including 62 overseas stars

Key changes

- Bowlers will once again be allowed to use saliva to shine the ball, a practice that was banned during the pandemic
- IPL will now allow teams to change the ball after the 10th over if dew becomes a factor
- Decision Review System (DRS) will include height-based no-ball reviews and wide-ball reviews outside the off-stump
- Introduction of a demerit points system ensures that players and teams maintain discipline. Offences will stay on record for 36 months

(Source: ET Online)

AROUNDTHEWORLD

Heathrow airport fully functional now

London Heathrow Airport said it was "fully operational" on Saturday, after an almost daylong closure sparked by an electrical substation fire. But airlines warned that severe disruption will last for days as they scramble to relocate planes and crews and get travellers to their destinations.

The airport's boss said he was proud of Heathrow's response to the incident. But inconvenienced passengers, angry airlines and concerned politicians sought answers about how one seemingly accidental fire could shut down Europe's busiest air hub. **AP**

Trump to pay for astronauts' time

US President Donald Trump said that he would pay the astronauts for their overtime stay in space out of his own pocket after learning that astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore got USD 5 per day for their extra time spent in space.

During an interaction with media persons in the Oval Office, Fox News Journalist Peter Doocy brought to attention that the two astronauts "Didn't get any overtime pay for all that extra time.."

He asked what the administration could do for them, to which Trump responded, "Well, nobody's ever mentioned this to me. If I have to, I'll pay it out of my own pocket...That's not a lot for what they had to go through." **ANI**

Pope to offer blessing from hospital

Pope Francis plans to make his first appearance in more than five weeks on Sunday, offering a blessing from the window of his room at Rome's Gemelli Hospital as he battles double pneumonia, the Vatican said.

Francis, 88, was admitted to the hospital on February 14 with a severe respiratory infection that has required evolving treatment. The pope has only been seen by the public once during his hospital stay, in a photo the Vatican released last week, showing the pontiff at prayer in a hospital chapel.

Francis wants to come to the hospital window around noon on Sunday to give a greeting and blessing, the Vatican said in a brief statement on Saturday.

The pope usually offers a weekly noon-time prayer in St. Peter's Square on Sundays. Francis has not been able to do this since February 9, before going to hospital. **Reuters**

CRIME FILES

Cop caught in gold scam

A police sub-inspector (PSI) has landed in hot water after allegedly duping a businessman out of 950 grams of gold, valued at over Rs 64 lakh. The accused, identified as Santosh PG, currently serving at Cotton Town Police Station, is facing a check bounce case and charges of fraud.

The complaint was filed by Dhananjay Shyam Rao Mali, a gold refinery owner in Halasur Gate. According to Mali, PSI Santosh approached him, claiming that a gold bar of 950 grams was needed for official verification by senior officers. Mali melted gold ornaments from his shop to prepare the bar. However, instead of returning the bullion or paying for it, Santosh allegedly promised to secure the amount by transferring ownership of a site in Hanumanthanagar under Mali's wife's name.

Despite repeated requests, neither the gold nor the payment materialised. The site was instead sold to another party for Rs 64,37,630. To pacify Mali, Santosh issued a cheque from his SBI account, which bounced due to insufficient funds. When confronted, Santosh allegedly threatened to frame Mali in a false case involving stolen goods. Dhananjay had lodged a complaint with DCP (West) S Girish against the PSI. Following a formal complaint, ACP Chandan Kumar, Vijayanagar Sub-Division, who conducted the investigation, submitted a report to the DCP, in which he confirmed that Santosh had committed dereliction of duty, misconduct and cheating. **BMB**

Realtor stabbed to death

A 37-year-old realtor, Lokanath Singh, was murdered in broad daylight at BGS Layout, Bilijaji village, under Soladevanahalli police station limits on Saturday evening.

According to police sources, the incident occurred around 5.30 pm near a construction site where two to three buildings were under development. Unknown assailants attacked Singh, stabbing him in the neck, leaving him dead on the spot. The motive behind the murder remains unclear, and the identity of the accused is yet to be determined.

Singh, a resident of Kuduru village in Magadi taluk, was involved in real estate dealings, and preliminary investigations suggest that the attack might be linked to his business. However, police are reviewing CCTV footage from the surrounding areas to track the culprits. **BMB**

Chai-Time

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

500 ÷ √25 x 3! = ?

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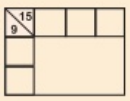
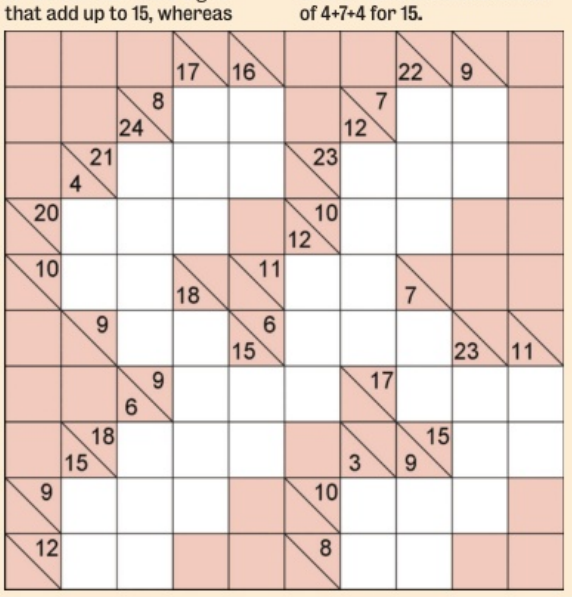
Kakuro

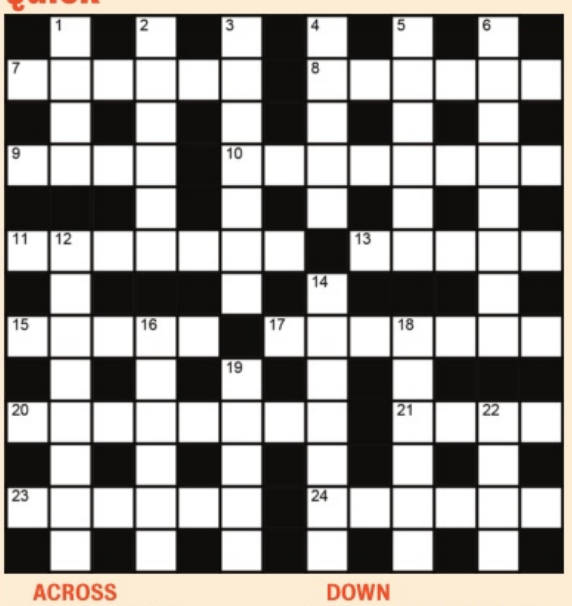
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Apple browser (6)
8 City in SW Iran (6)
9 Secular; a layman (4)
10 Table supports (8)
11 This cathedral in Bangalore is over 200 years old (2,5)
13 Vacuous (5)
15 Refreshment booth (5)
17 Small parcels or big envelopes? (7)
20 Birth to death (4,4)
21 Siestas (4)
23 Brine-cured (6)
24 Chap or person? (6)

DOWN

1 Currency of Bangladesh ? (4)
2 Dashboard (6)
3 Fault (7)
4 Bread maker (5)
5 Box (6)
6 Red wine (8)
12 Tobago's partner (8)
14 Depart hastily? (4,3)
16 Separates metal from ore (6)
18 Humane or benevolent (6)
19 Breezy (5)
22 The front of a ship (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: A EQUALS C

DT KREKYZ UQ QFPKFTK GWF ZKXXQ SFB GWS SFB ADT'Z OF QFPKZWUTL.

Linemaro

I know milk does the body good, but heck, how much have you been drinking?

Mind chow

The most difficult choice a politician must ever make is whether to be a hypocrite or a liar

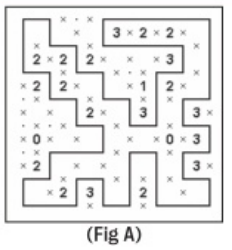
Joke of the day

A frugal widow goes to the newspaper to take out an obituary notice for her late husband. "How much?" she asks the fellow behind the counter. "One dollar per word," he says. She says, "Make it 'MacGregor died.'" "It's a five-word minimum." She nearly faints but collects herself. "Very well, make it 'MacGregor died. Volvo for sale.'"

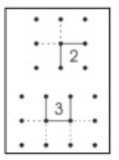
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)



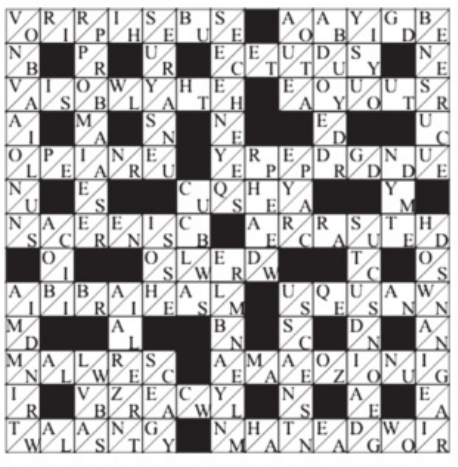
(Fig B) Not Allowed

How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)

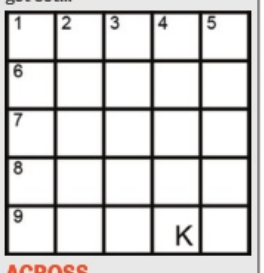
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

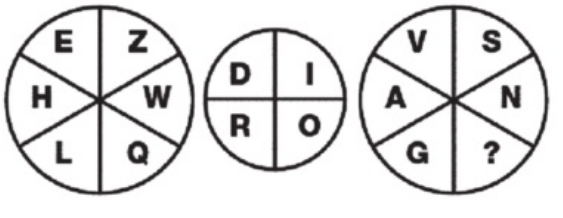
1 Spams; 6 Ale be;
7 Dam am; 8 In CIA;
9 Snick

DOWN

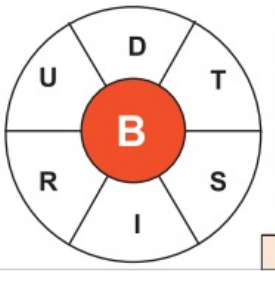
1 Manas; 2 I a cab;
3 CID me; 4 Lank P;
5 Mises

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

06 Average; 07 Good; 09 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

4								3
1		8	3		9	7		2
		9		7		4		
8	6			3			7	5
5	1			6			4	8
		6		9		1		
9		5	2		6	8		4
3								9

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 8
2 4 6 8

Medium = 14
2 2 6 8

Hard = 2
6 7 8 9

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Arm is longer. 2. Windshield is different. 3. Cap is larger. 4. Stone is added to front of bank. 5. Letter "A" is reversed. 6. Bandage is moved.

Riddler

Find the missing number

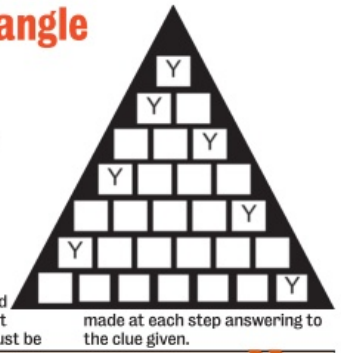
1
2 35 2
1

2
2 99 3
3

2
1 ? 3
4

Alpha triangle

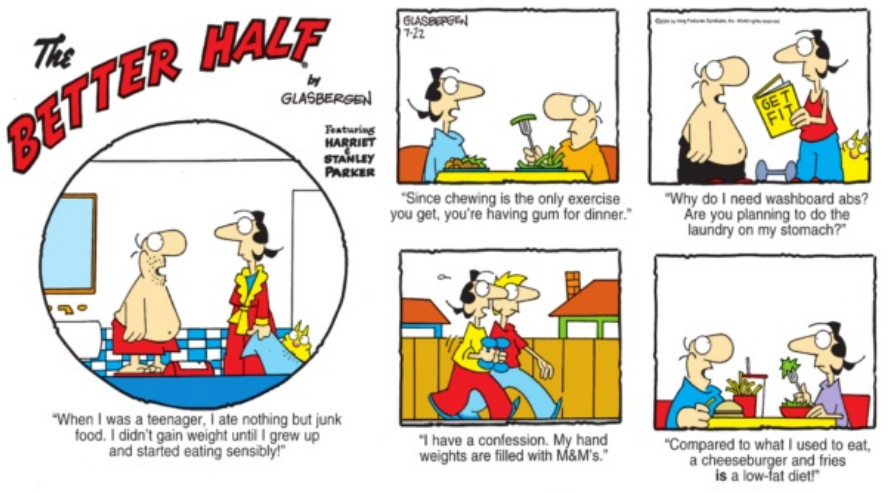
1 25th letter
2 Yes, slang
3 A beam of light
4 36
5 days 5 Prepared
6 Gangster
7 All about food



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
Featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
"When I was a teenager, I ate nothing but junk food. I didn't gain weight until I grew up and started eating sensibly!"
GLASBERGEN 7-22
"Since chewing is the only exercise you get, you're having gum for dinner."
GET FIT
"Why do I need washboard abs? Are you planning to do the laundry on my stomach?"
"I have a confession. My hand weights are filled with M&M's."
"Compared to what I used to eat, a cheeseburger and fries is a low-fat diet!"

BABY BLUES™
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
IT'S OKAY, WREN. I'LL CATCH YOU.
JUST GO WHEN YOU'RE READY.
TAKE YOUR TIME. NO RUSH.
BE CAREFUL, DAD.
CAREFUL OF WHAT?
WHONK
SHE LIKES TO GO WHEN YOU'RE NOT LOOKING.
GOT IT.

FLASH GORDON
BY JIM KEEFE
CONTINUING: THE WAY IT BEGAN...
FLASH GORDON, DALE ARDEN AND DR. HANS ZARKOV CRASH-LAND ON THE ALIEN WORLD THREATENING EARTH'S EXISTENCE.
THE PLANET MONGO.
MIRACULOUSLY, THEY SURVIVE. HOWEVER, THE IMPACT LEAVES BOTH DALE AND ZARKOV UNCONSCIOUS.
TAKING DALE IN HIS ARMS, FLASH MAKES HIS WAY TOWARD A DISTANT CITY.
EN ROUTE, THEY'RE BESIEGED!
DALE AWAKENS, HORRIFIED, AS THE MONSTERS ADVANCE!
HAVING BEEN SPOTTED FROM THE CITY, A MIGHTY ARMADA IS DISPATCHED.
THE CREATURES ARE DESTROYED.
FLASH AND DALE... TAKEN PRISONER!
THEY'RE BROUGHT BEFORE THE TYRANNICAL RULER OF THIS HOSTILE WORLD.
SELF-PROCLAIMED EMPEROR OF THE UNIVERSE...
...MING THE MERCILESS!
NEXT: MING'S REIGN!

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
With strong support from your network, you may successfully implement business plans, leading to financial gains. Domestic life remains harmonious, strengthening understanding with your spouse. Those in metal-related industries and booking agencies can expect positive results.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
You may feel spiritually inclined and consider visiting a religious place for inner peace. Acts of charity, both financial and moral, will bring personal satisfaction. People around you may seek guidance, and you will experience a sense of fulfillment and patience.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
A sense of dullness may affect your mood, requiring control over your temper and distractions. Avoid unnecessary investments. Lovebirds should steer clear of arguments over trivial matters to maintain harmony in their relationships.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Happiness and mental peace define your day. Strengthening domestic bonds with friends and family will bring joy. Your relationship with your spouse improves, ensuring harmony at home. In business, new partnerships may form, fostering growth through innovation.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Your day begins on a positive note. Rivals and hidden enemies will remain under control. Hard work will be recognized by seniors, possibly leading to new responsibilities or promotions. Students will gain clarity in career choices, guided by the Moon's blessings.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Family matters will take precedence today. Exploring additional income sources may lead to financial gains. Interests in art, movies, and glamour may spark creativity. Lovebirds gain clarity in their relationships, while students remain focused on career goals.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
You may feel overwhelmed with multiple options, leading to confusion. Seeking advice from elders before making major decisions will be beneficial. Your past actions may influence both work and family life. Pay extra attention to your parents' health.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Business plans will succeed with the support of subordinates. Short business trips may bring long-term benefits. Social and family gatherings will strengthen networks, opening doors for new opportunities.

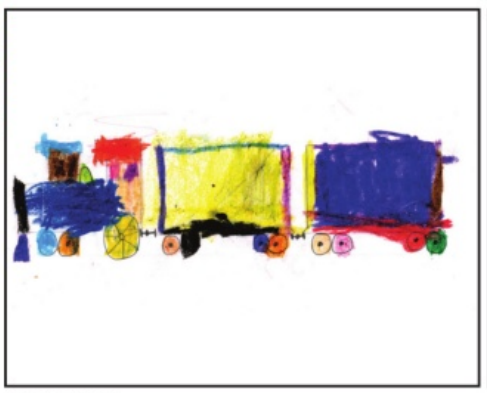
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
A favorable day for financial gains. Smart strategies will maximize profits, and savings may increase by avoiding unnecessary expenses. Lovebirds might be engaged in family events, bringing joy and fulfillment.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Sibling and family matters may demand attention. However, professional support ensures a smooth workflow. Your network plays a key role in completing tasks successfully. You may consider launching a new venture with the assistance of close connections, leading to smart gains with minimal effort.

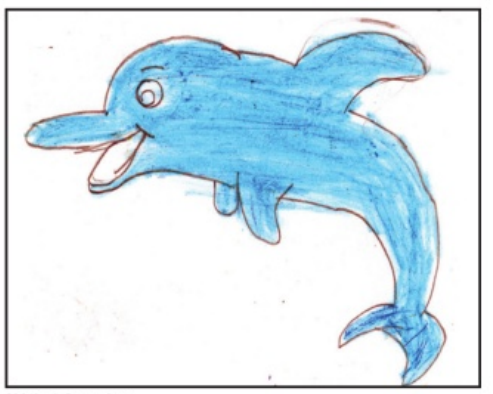
Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Lack of energy may affect productivity and health. Professional meetings may not yield expected results, leading to temporary frustration. However, by evening, disappointments may turn into happiness. Avoid reckless driving and adventure sports.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
A promising day for business growth, with new clients contributing to increased profits. Singles have a high chance of meeting a suitable match. Transparency is crucial in relationships—hiding things from your spouse may create misunderstandings. Job seekers may land new opportunities, and employees might see prospects for promotion.

KIDZONE



Adhrit Bengaluru



Akhilesh Bengaluru

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
600÷5x6 = 100x6 = 600

RIDDLER
99; (1+2+2+1) x (1+2+2+1) -1 = 35; (2+2+3+3) x (2+2+3+4) -1 = 99; (1+2+3+4) -1 = 99

QUOTE UNCODE
An expert is someone who tells you why you can't do something.

FAST FIVE

N	I	C	K	S
A	C	I	N	I
M	A	D	A	M
A	B	E	L	E
S	A	M	P	S

BULL'S EYE
bird, brutt, brut, burst, bust, DISTURB, drub, stub, turbid

STRIKE OUT

T	A	S	T	Y	M	A	T	A	D	O	R			
I		B	R	A	W	L		N		E		E		
M	A	L	E	S		A	M	A	Z	I	N	G		
D		L		B		C		D		A				
A	B	R	A	H	A	M		S	O	U	A	W		
	O		S	L	E	W		I		O				
S	C	E	N	I	C		E	R	A	S	E	D		
U		S		U	S	H	A			Y				
O	P	I	N	E		E	P	E	R	G	N	E		
I	M	S		N		E		U						
V	I	O	L	A	T	E		E	Y	O	T	S		
B	R		R	C	E	T	U	S		N				
S	A	F	A	R	I		A	B	A	D	A	N		

QUICK

MENSA PUZZLE
1. Start on the upper left hand segment of the left hand circle and move anti-clockwise around it. Then move to the upper left of the central circle and move clockwise, then on to the right hand circle, and again move anti-clockwise. Letters are written in sequence along this path, skipping 3 letters, then 4, 5 and 6, before repeating this sequence.

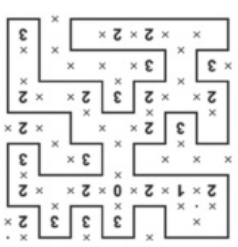
SUDOKU

4	2	7	6	8	1	5	9	3
1	5	8	3	4	9	7	6	2
6	3	9	5	7	2	4	8	1
8	6	2	1	3	4	9	7	5
7	9	4	8	2	5	3	1	6
5	1	3	9	6	7	2	4	8
2	8	6	4	9	3	1	5	7
9	7	5	2	1	6	8	3	4
3	4	1	7	5	8	6	2	9

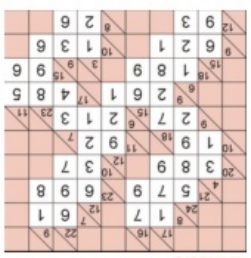
ALPHA TRIANGLE
Y, Ya, Ray, Year, Ready, Yardie, Dietary.

GO FIGURE
Easy
8 + 4 + 2 – 6 – 8 = 0
Medium
8 + 6 + 2 – 2 = 14
Hard
7 + 9 – 6 – 8 = 2

LOOP



KAKURO



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Waltz in the building
Academy award-winning actor Christoph Waltz has become the latest addition to the fifth season of the upcoming Hulu series "Only Murders in the Building"

BangaloreMirror | 16
Sunday, March 23, 2025
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Sharvari about working with 'incredible' Alia

Actress Sharvari is brimming with admiration for Alia Bhatt as she reflects on her biggest takeaway from the upcoming film "Alpha". Calling the "Gangubai Kathiawadi" star an "incredible" actor and an equally wonderful human being, she shared that working alongside the powerhouse performer has been nothing short of a masterclass.

Sharvari, who was in the capital for the launch of Sheba's new campaign, told IANS: "I think my most important takeaway of course from this film is to be able to learn from Alia. She's an incredible actor and an incredible human being."

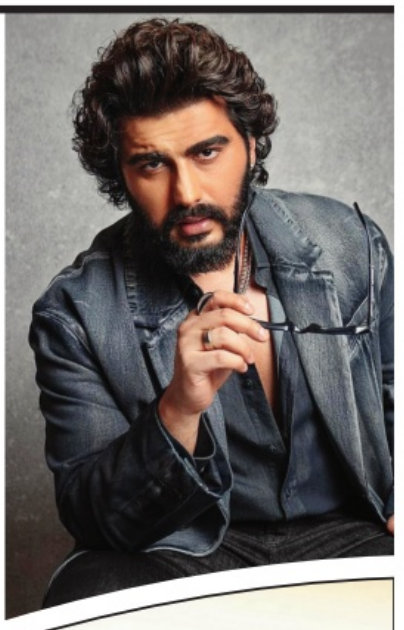
Sharvari, who began her journey in the film industry as an assistant director on hits like Bajirao Mastani and Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweety, believes working with Alia has been a transformative experience. She said that every lesson she has learned from the "Dear Zindagi" star will serve as a guiding force in all her future projects.

"And it was like a master class actually to just be with her on set every single day. So, I think I will take everything that I have learnt from her and hopefully, you know, apply it in every coming project. So, I'm really grateful to have gotten this opportunity to work alongside Alia," she wrote.

Directed by Shiv Rawail, "Alpha" will mark the seventh film in Yash Raj Films' expansive spy universe. This universe began with the "Tiger" franchise, starring Salman Khan and Katrina Kaif, starting with "Ek Tha Tiger" and followed by "Tiger Zinda Hai." The saga continued with "War," "Pathaan," and "Tiger 3." Upcoming films in the franchise include "War 2," directed by Ayan Mukerji, "Pathaan 2," and "Tiger vs. Pathaan.

In Alpha, Alia and Sharvari both play super agents. —IANS

Perks of being single



Arjun Kapoor, following his very public breakup with Malaika Arora, recently hosted the 'Showsha Reel Awards' and made light of his new bachelor status. The actor teased the benefits of being single, for himself and for the audience.

Kapoor quipped, "Today, I might be alone, and that's okay. Speaking of loneliness, I think it's not such an evil thing for all of you and for me. It benefits everyone. Because I will get compensated for being the only host, and you people will have to listen to less nonsense—I mean, less chatting—since human attention spans have decreased."

Arjun and Malaika declared their relationship openly in 2018, sharing loving photos on social media throughout their vacations. The couple parted ways after an eight-year relationship in 2024. Arjun accepted his bachelorhood during the promotion of his film 'Singham Again.'

The two appear to be on good terms despite the breakup.

Arjun visited Malaika's television show, 'India's Best Dancer vs Super Dancer,' in February to support his movie 'Mere Husband Ki Biwi' with Rakul Preet Singh and Bhumi Pednekar. He could not help but be impressed with Malaika's dance.

Upon being asked for his views on her performance, Arjun remarked, "My mouth has been shut for many years; I still like staying quiet," which was greeted with laughter by Malaika. He went on to add, "But I want to say this: I have gotten a chance to hear all my favorite songs, which just show the career and the life that she has had."

Professionally, Arjun was last spotted in 'Mere Husband Ki Biwi,'. He will be seen in the No Entry sequel. **ETimes**

PROPER DAY OFF

What Kriti means when she say it is her off day

Kriti Sanon is one of the busiest actresses in Bollywood, however, she manages to take some time off for herself every now and then. The diva revealed what her proper 'day-off' looks like through her latest social media post.

Kriti shared that she enjoyed her recent day off in more than a month by waking up late and lazing in bed. She further soaked some sun and indulged in self-care. She further did some much needed catching up with her best friend and wore her comfy pajamas.

The 'Luka Chuppi' actress ended her perfect day off by setting an alarm for 5: 30 am for the next day with 3 snoozes. Sharing the details of her fun day, Kriti wrote on her IG, "A proper OFF day after more than a month...Slept without an alarm...Lazed in the bed...Soaked some sun... Some self care...And some catching up with a bff who came over as I refused to wear anything but my PJs today!!..." Kriti also posted some quirky photos of her day on her Insta.

At the moment, Kriti is busy shooting for her next, "Tere Ishk Mein". Directed by Aanand L Rai, the highly anticipated project will see Dhanush as the lead. The film is believed to be a spiritual successor to the world of 'Raanjhanaa', as it delves deeper into themes of unrequited love, longing, and emotional conflict.

"Tere Ishk Mein" marks the return of the terrific trio of Aanand L Rai, Dhanush, and A.R. Rahman after "Raanjhanaa" and "Atrangi Re".

Presented by Gulshan Kumar, in collaboration with T-Series, and Colour Yellow, the drama has been produced by Bhushan Kumar and Krishan Kumar. —ETimes

Watch this story come alive by pointing your phone camera at the QR code

Saree chronicles
10 style lessons you can take from Nora Fatehi's ethnic looks